

# Moderation and Extremism

## in the Media Discourse of the Islamic Movement

An Analytical Study of the Content  
and Discourse of AsSabeel  
Jordanian Newspaper



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The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan

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# **Moderation and Extremism in the Media Discourse of the Islamic Movement**

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## Introduction

Jordan's Islamist movement attains a prominent status in Jordanian political life, having undergone many transitions throughout its organisational and political history. The movement has developed its media discourse since early 1990s, when Jordan launched a democratisation process. This development was coupled with the emergence of independently-licensed media outlets representing the movement's political line and discourse.

Amid political and media openness, Assabeel newspaper was first published as a weekly in 1993, bringing together figures of the Islamist movement led by the Islamic Action Front (IAF) party, the political arm of the Muslim Brotherhood. Published by Dar Assabeel Press and Distribution, the newspaper in 2009 became a daily and mouthpiece for Jordan's Islamist movement. Headed by IAF oppositionists, the paper regularly publishes articles written by members of the Jordanian Islamist movement as well as Islamist leaders from other Arab countries. Although Assabeel presents itself as a newspaper with a focus on political parties, it is commonly known among Jordanian media, political and government/state circles that the daily is controlled by the IAF, and speaks for the Islamist opposition.



## Objectives

This study examines the Jordanian Islamist movement's discourse, echoed in Assabeel daily newspaper, in order to identify:

- Characteristics of content published in Assabeel, including news reports and op-eds.
- Features of the newspaper's editorial policy based on the frames of reference for political and cultural values of moderatism and extremism.
- Approaches adopted in op-eds published in Assabeel addressing four crises or issues relevant to extremism, terrorism, and moderatism.

## Methodology and Data Collection Instruments

The study adopted a method of survey sampling, using two research instruments:

### I. Content Analysis

It explores editorial features and standards of the Assabeel's news stories. The analysis is a research instrument that describes manifest content of a communication message in an objective, systematic and quantitative manner.<sup>[1]</sup>

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[1] Berelson, B. (1952). Content Analysis in Communication Research. New York: Little, Brown & Co./Free Press. p. 2, 18.

It is “an instrument for observation, description of communication/ media material, testing communication/ media content hypotheses, and predication”.<sup>[2]</sup>

This research instrument ensures that content analysis conforms to the precise definitions of classification categories used in the analysis to prevent overlapping. It also establishes consistency through a scientific methodology and clear research procedures to measure responsiveness to hypotheses and questions asked by the researcher. This quantitative instrument examines and explores manifest content of communication/media; and not what the researcher thinks or expects. It provides means to scrutinise the quality and types of results.<sup>[3]</sup>

## **II. Discourse Analysis**

It is an instrument adopting qualitative and quantitative research to explore the ideological features of the media discourse. It is employed to identify approaches of op-eds published in the newspaper based on the frames of reference for cultural and political values, specifically values of moderatism and extremism as well as Assabeel’s stand on terrorism.

The instrument helps identify ideological theories, frames of reference, and evidence analysis, on which the discourse is built. It examines statements and evidence to prove or refute theories -- which facilitates the process of setting these against media professional values and human rights.

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[2] Abdelrahman A., Salem N., and Abdelhamid L. (1993). Content Analysis in Media Studies. Cairo: Studies Press. P. 262.

[3] Stempel, G. H. and Westley, B. H. (1981). Research Methods in Mass Communication. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall.

### **III. Sampling**

In order to achieve objectives of the study, the aforementioned methodology required selecting a survey sample categorised into two types in accordance with determinants of data collection instruments:

#### **Content Analysis Sample**

Twenty-four issues of Assabeel were selected through systematic random sampling between 2014 and 2015; one issue per month. Under this method, the researcher picked issues of Assabeel in the line with following criterion: In the first year, Sunday's newspaper, the first day of January; Monday's newspaper in February; Tuesday's newspaper in March; Wednesday's newspaper in April, and so forth. This ensures that all week days are included in the systematic random sample, and provides greater opportunity to explore the target period of time.

#### **Discourse Analysis Sample:**

Twenty-five issues of Assabeel were selected through purposive sampling, picking newspaper issues that covered four crises or events relevant to the study:

1. Occupation of the northern Iraqi city of Mosul by Daesh, or ISIS -- Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (June 11 - June 20, 2014)
2. Capture of Royal Jordanian Air Force pilot Muath Al Kasasbeh by ISIS (December 24, 2014 - December 30, 2014).
3. Paris attacks (November 14, 2015 - November 19, 2015).

## Content Analysis of Moderatism and Extremism: News Coverage

### I. Scope of News Coverage and Geographical Identity

Between 2014 and 2015, the researcher analysed 24 Assabeel issues; one per month. This sample comprises news reports covering general news, as well as, political, local and international developments. The discourse analysis in the second part of this study examines op-eds.

The researcher analysed 887 news stories, including 521 items on Jordanian affairs -- 59 percent of Assabeel content. News of other parts of the Arab world, as well as regional and international issues constituted 41 percent of content.

Table (1) shows the allocation of local, regional and international content, in line with the classification method adopted in this study: Arab affairs 11 percent; Palestinian issues 13 percent; and regional/international developments 12 percent.

These figures show preliminary indicators of the editorial policy based on what is of interest for the newspaper's editorial agenda. Generally, in the prevailing media context governing the performance of Arab daily newspapers, there are no major structural flaws in the allocation and diversification of Assabeel's editorial interests and priorities. But at the level of general professional dimensions, local content is still below international professional standards.

*Table 1: Coverage of general and political news*

General and political news	Number of items	Percentage
Regional and international developments	101	11%
Arab affairs	95	11%
Palestinian issues	115	13%
Jordanian affairs	521	59%
Other news	55	6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>887</b>	<b>100%</b>

Locally, around 52 percent of news coverage focuses on general Jordanian affairs that are not connected to a specific area or region. About 27 percent of coverage goes to the capital Amman, and 21 percent to the country's governorates.

In comparison with a 2103 study on coverage of local news in Jordanian media outlets, this study shows that coverage of news in governorates in Assabeel and other dailies is nearly identical on average, constituting 21 percent of content. Coverage of general national issues formed 64 percent of content, and Amman news 14 percent. <sup>[4]</sup>

These figures show that in terms of geographical identity, Assabeel's editorial agenda is not different from the agendas of other Jordanian dailies, despite the newspaper's editorial policy and ownership patterns.

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[4] Twissi B., (2013). Coverage of Local Affairs in the Jordanian Media. Jordan Journal of Social Sciences. v. 3. p. 328-351.

*Table 2: News coverage based on geographical identity*

Geographical identity	Number of items	Percentage
General Jordanian issues	273	52%
Northern governorates	46	9%
Central governorates	22	4%
Southern governorates	40	8%
The capital Amman	140	27%
<b>Total</b>	<b>521</b>	<b>100%</b>

## II. Topics of News Content

The study examines topics of news content at the local and international levels in order to determine the centres of attention by topic. It also explores the extent to which the content reflects news diversity in a bid to identify features of the editorial policy in this regard.

In the context of Jordanian dailies, these figures show clear diversification in coverage of local news topics: Activities of the government, including ministries, 18 percent; development and services issues 16 percent; and activities of the King or/and the Royal Hashemite Court 13 percent.

Assabeel reports on issues of freedoms and human rights at a rate (eight percent) higher than other Jordanian dailies. This indicates that the newspaper adopts political / opposition policies.

*Table 3: Jordanian affairs by topic*

Jordanian national affairs	Number of items	Percentage
Activities of the King, or/and the Royal Hashemite Court	48	9%
Government activities	94	18%
Economic problems	47	9%
Parliamentary affairs	57	11%
General policies (development/services)	83	16%
Legal cases and courts	31	6%
Human rights and freedoms	32	6%
Activities of the civil society	41	8%
Other issues	88	17%
<b>Total</b>	<b>521</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table (4) shows allocation of topics of political, regional, and international affairs. Assabeel clearly prioritises news of Palestinian affairs (31 percent), which occupy a full page and sometimes more. The Syrian crisis comes next, with 13 percent. Although the two topics are important, prioritising Palestinian news reflects an editorial policy connected to a political movement's agenda. In other word, the attention Assabeel gives to news of the Palestinian cause is not based on newsworthiness.

Coverage of terrorism-related issues is limited (two percent), while Islamic current/contemporary affairs constitute five percent, although this topic is not as newsworthy as the fight against terrorism.

*Table 4: Political, regional, and international affairs by topic*

<b>Political, regional, and international affairs</b>	<b>Number of items</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Palestinian cause	115	31%
Syrian crisis	45	12%
Yemeni crisis	9	2%
Situation in Iraq	13	4%
Situation in Egypt	24	7%
Situation in Libya	3	1%
Situation in Tunisia	2	0.5%
Terrorism issues	6	2%
Saudi affairs/developments/policies	3	1%
Qatari affairs/developments/policies	2	0.5%
Turkish affairs/developments/policies	14	4%
Iranian affairs/developments/policies	15	4%
US affairs/developments/policies	20	5%
Russian affairs/developments/policies	14	4%
European affairs/developments/policies	20	5%
Islamic current/contemporary affairs	18	5%
Other issues	43	12%
<b>Total</b>	<b>366</b>	<b>100%</b>



### III. News Coverage of Violence Deemed Terrorism

In order to identify features of the editorial policy on reporting on terrorism-related issues, the researcher analysed content based on coverage of violence considered by the editors as terrorism. The use of this concept to describe specific incidents is limited: Only 61 cases, representing six percent of news content (table 5). Excluding reports on Israel's terrorism, only 46 cases remain, or five percent of content. There were two cases talking about state-linked violence, while other reports focused on violence linked to the Syrian state/ regime, Egyptian regime/state, and the Houthis. One case described violence linked to the Turkish state.

*Table 5: Reports on cases of violence deemed terrorism*

Violence deemed terrorism	Number of items	Percentage
State-linked violence	2	3%
Violence linked to Islamist groups in general	5	8%
Violence and armed activities linked to the ISIS	5	8%
Violence and armed activities linked to the Houthis	6	10%
Violence linked to the Syrian state/regime	10	16%
Violence linked to the Turkish state/regime	1	2%
Violence linked to the Egyptian state/ regime	8	13%
Violence linked to Israeli practices	15	25%
Other types of violence	9	15%
<b>Total</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>100%</b>

Examining news sources describing violence as terrorism clarifies professional aspects as well as political and editorial dimensions. Table (6) shows that 39 percent of news reports were attributed to one source; 33 percent to multiple sources; 15 percent to vague sources; and three percent to anonymous sources. Around 94 percent of these news reports were attributed to news sources, reflecting the general editorial policy on news coverage. But in the limited reports on cases of violence linked to Islamist groups, all news reports were attributed to one or multiple sources. This shows that the editorial team was careful about linking such groups to violence, compared to many reports on cases of violence linked to the Syrian regime that were all attributed to a single source, or vague or anonymous sources.

*Table 6: Reports on cases of violence by news source*

Violence deemed terrorism	News sources										Total	
	One source		Multiple sources		Unsourced		Vague sources		Anonymous sources			
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
State-linked violence	0	0	0	0	1	50	1	50	0	0	2	3
Violence linked to Islamist groups in general	2	40	2	40	1	20	0	0	0	0	5	8
Violence/armed activities linked to ISIS	3	60	2	40	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	8

Violence deemed terrorism	News sources										Total	
	One source		Multiple sources		Unsourced		Vague sources		Anonymous sources			
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Violence and armed activities linked to the Houthis	2	33	3	50	0	0	1	17	0	0	6	10
Violence linked to the Syrian state/regime	5	50	0	0	3	30	1	10	1	10	10	16
Violence linked to the Turkish state/regime	1	100	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2
Violence linked to the Egyptian state/regime	2	25	4	50	1	13	1	13	0	0	8	13
Violence linked to Israeli practices	4	27	7	47	1	7	3	20	0	0	15	25
Other types of violence	3	33	2	22	1	11	2	22	1	11	9	15
Total	24	39	20	33	6	10	9	15	2	3	61	100

According to bias and neutrality standards, which reflect sources, tone and accentuation, 64 percent of news reports on violence deemed terrorism were unbiased. Eighty percent of reports on Islamist groups, 60 percent of ISIS news, 50 percent of stories on the Egyptian regime, and 40 percent of Syrian state/regime news items were unbiased (table 7). These figures show that Assabeel was careful about being biased, and inclined to maintain neutrality in reporting news linking Islamist groups to terrorism. This carefulness, however, was absent in the cases of Egypt and Syria.

*Table 7: Bias and violence*

	Bias				Total	
Violence deemed terrorism	Unbiased		Biased			
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
State-linked violence	1	50%	1	50%	2	3%
Violence linked to Islamist groups in general	4	80%	1	20%	5	8%
Violence/armed activities linked to ISIS	3	60%	2	40%	5	8%
Violence and armed activities linked to the Houthis	4	67%	2	33%	6	10%
Violence linked to the Syrian state/ regime	4	40%	6	60%	10	16%
Violence linked to the Turkish state/ regime	1	100%	0	0%	1	2%
Violence linked to the Egyptian state/ regime	4	50%	4	50%	8	13%
Violence linked to Israeli practices	13	87%	2	13%	15	25%
Other types of violence	5	56%	4	44%	9	15%
Total	39	64%	22	36%	61	100%

# IV. Professional standards

Four standards were used to determine the extent to which Assabeel’s editorial policy complied with professional practices: Dealing with sources, balancing sources, separating facts from opinion/speculation, and bias. Procedural definitions used in this study revealed features of the editorial policy from a professional perspective.

Table (8) shows the number and proportion of news items with flaws, constituting 12 percent of content. These were news reports with anonymous, or vague sources.

Table 8: Sources in news reports

Sources	Number of items	Percentage
One source	576	65%
Multiple sources	207	23%
Unsourced	34	4%
Vague sources	40	5%
Anonymous sources	30	3%
Total	887	100%

Table (9) shows the number of balanced news items. Balance ensures that all sides of a story are reflected. Seventy-five percent of Assabeel’s news reports were balanced -- a high rate compared to other Jordanian dailies. Unbalanced reports were 21 percent.

Table 9: Balance

Balance	Number of items	Percentage
Balanced	664	75%

Table (10) shows number and proportion of reports separating facts from opinion -- a fundamental principle that tests editorial professionalism of media outlets. Eighty-two percent of Assabeel's content complies with this principle.

*Table 10: Separating facts from opinion*

Separation	Number of items	Percentage
Separated	792	82%
Unseparated	161	18%
<b>Total</b>	<b>887</b>	<b>100%</b>

Separating facts from speculation, as table (11) shows, can be seen in 89 percent of the newspaper's content. Speculation, however, was clear in the remaining 11 percent. Speculation attracts political agendas, which turn the media into a tool of propaganda in a bid to influence society and politics.

*Table 11: Separating facts from speculation*

Separation	Number of items	Percentage
Separated	792	89%
Unseparated	95	11%
<b>Total</b>	<b>887</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table (12) shows that 82 percent of news reports covering local, regional, or international developments are unbiased, which, to an extent, is consistent with the newspaper's compliance with balanced reporting. Unbalanced reports usually fuel bias. This percentage is also consistent, to an extent, with Assabeel's separation of facts from opinion/speculation. News reports mixing facts and opinion/speculation constitute a source of bias.

*Table 12: Bias*

Bias	Number of items	Percentage
Unbiased	730	82%
Biased	157	18%
<b>Total</b>	<b>887</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table (13) shows the main types of bias, in line with most suitable procedural definitions. Accentuation was the highest -- 34 percent of content. It usually appears in the use of tone and page layout; for example, spreading the headline of a 300-word story across five or six columns to accentuate the report, which is a form of measurable bias. Favouritism comes next, and can be seen in 23 percent of content. In favouritism, tone is employed to privilege certain parties. Source overkill -- 20 percent -- is the constant use of specific sources, and, just like selectivity, it is a form of bias.

*Table 13: Types of bias*

Types of bias	Number of items	Percentage
Favouritism	36	23%
Source overkill	31	20%
Optional omission	10	6%
Lack of context	11	7%
Accentuation	54	34%
Other types	15	10%
<b>Total</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table (14) shows that bias in coverage of national affairs is higher compared to reports on international affairs: 174 cases (33 percent), and 90 cases (25 percent), respectively. In coverage of national affairs, 40 cases (43 percent) of bias were clear in reports on government activities, and 40 percent in stories on general policies.

*Table 14: Bias in coverage of Jordanian national affairs by topic*

	Bias				Total	
National affairs	Unbiased		Biased			
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Activities of the King, or/and the Royal Hashemite Court	36	75%	12	25%	48	9%
Government activities	54	57%	40	43%	94	18%
Economic problems	30	64%	17	36%	47	9%
Parliamentary affairs	37	65%	20	35%	57	11%
General policies (development/ services)	50	60%	33	40%	83	16%
Legal cases and courts	20	65%	11	35%	31	6%
Human rights and freedoms	22	69%	10	31%	32	6%
Activities of the civil society	30	73%	11	27%	41	8%
Other issues	68	77%	20	23%	88	17%
Total	347	67%	174	33%	521	100%



Table (15) figures show bias in news coverage in general, in line with internationally-adopted standards, chiefly dealing with sources, language/ tone, and accentuation. Excluding Palestinian affairs, which are connected to the Palestinian cause, the most biased reports were on the Syrian crisis, with 15 cases, constituting 33 percent of news coverage. There were 16 (37 percent) cases of bias related to coverage of Islamic affairs. Meanwhile, 64 percent of reports on Turkish affairs are biased, and 33 percent of stories on Iran are also biased. Reports on US or Russian affairs were unbiased.

*Table 15: Bias in coverage of political, regional, and international affairs by topic*

	Bias				Total	
Political, regional, and international affairs	Unbiased		Biased			
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Palestinian cause	90	78%	25	22%	115	31%
Syrian crisis	30	67%	15	33%	45	12%
Yemeni crisis	6	67%	3	33%	9	2%
Situation in Iraq	13	100%	0	0%	13	4%
Situation in Egypt	17	71%	7	29%	24	7%
Situation in Libya	3	100%	0	0%	3	1%
Situation in Tunisia	2	100%	0	0%	2	1%
Terrorism issues	5	83%	1	17%	6	2%
Saudi affairs/developments/policies	3	100%	0	0%	3	1%
Qatari affairs/developments/policies	1	50%	1	50%	2	1%

Political, regional, and international affairs	Bias				Total	
	Unbiased		Biased			
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Turkish affairs/developments/policies	5	36%	9	64%	14	4%
Iranian affairs/developments/policies	10	67%	5	33%	15	4%
US affairs/developments/policies	20	100%	0	0%	20	5%
Russian affairs/developments/policies	14	100%	0	0%	14	4%
European affairs/developments/policies	17	85%	3	15%	20	5%
Islamic current/contemporary affairs	13	72%	5	28%	18	5%
Other issues	27	63%	16	37%	43	12%
Total	276	75%	90	25%	366	100%

## Moderatism and Extremism Discourse: Analysis of Approaches Adopted by Columnists

This part of the study analyses the discourse of Assabeel columnists, or their op-eds. The researcher analysed 25 different newspaper issues, covering discourses on three crises or issues:

- Occupation of the northern Iraqi city of Mosul by Daesh, or ISIS -- Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (June 11 - June 20, 2014).

- Capture of Royal Jordanian Air Force pilot Muath Al Kasasbeh by ISIS (December 24, 2014 -December 30, 2014).
- Paris attacks (November 14, 2015 - November 19, 2015).

The researcher examined columnists' op-eds, commentaries, political analyses, and studies published in different newspaper sections, including a page of articles, two pages of opinion pieces and studies, and pages with irregular/guest contributors.

1. The methodology of analysing the media discourse as an ideological product that keeps pace with current affairs was divided into two stages:
2. Examination of discourse based on instruments of analysis.
3. Examination of discourse based on how it deals with facts and events. In other words, studying the way columnists addressed crises and issues.

The quantitative/qualitative analysis adopted four main instruments in order to explore discourse characteristics and how it dealt with issues of moderatism, extremism and terrorism.

## **I. Analysis of op-eds by topic**

### **A. Op-eds by topic**

The analysis sample included 286 op-eds published in 25 issues, addressing a variety of topics that the researcher classified into nine main categories. The writers were columnists and irregular/guest contributors, who are usually Jordanian Islamist figures, and supporters, as well as other Jordanian oppositionists and political leaders from other Arab countries.

The op-eds were categorised by geographical identity of main topics addressed by the writer. The topics were categorised into four groups to understand the stance of the newspaper's discourse on moderatism, extremism and terrorism, and to answer the following questions:

- Do the op-eds reflect one or multiple discourses?
- What are the centres of attention for the columnists?
- Are these centres of attention reflect specific approaches to discourse(s)?

Based on that, the four categories are (table 16):

#### ► **Islamic ideological issues**

Op-eds, commentaries and studies addressing Islamic ideological issues ranked first, constituting 24.1 percent of this type of content. This means that columnists were more interested in Islamic issues than national affairs. Opinion leaders of the Islamist movement contribute articles on Islamic affairs at a higher rate than regular newspaper columnists.

#### ► **Jordanian national issues and affairs**

This topic formed 18.1 percent of the op-ed content -- similar to the discourse on Palestinian affairs. Op-eds on Jordanian affairs were classified into two categories:

- Political issues (10.1 percent), which include stances of the writers on political measures and the position of the government and elite, particularly ethical issues reflecting oppositionist and critical views.
- National affairs (8 percent), including general national policies, and services.

### ► **Palestinian affairs**

Articles on this topic occupied an advanced position -- 17.8 percent. Op-eds addressing Palestinian issues can be seen in the pages of articles, studies and Islamic affairs as well as specials.

### ► **Arab affairs**

Forming 16.5 percent of the op-ed content, articles on this topic tackled general issues (9.8 percent) and Egyptian affairs (6.7 percent). Assabeel gave special attention to Egyptian issues due to the current developments and transition in the Arab country.

### ► **Regional and international affairs**

Constituting 13.7 percent of the sample content, articles on this topic were classified into two categories: Non-Arab affairs (6.3 percent), focusing mainly on Iranian and Turkish issues/policies; and general international affairs (7.4 percent), concentrating mainly on US and Russian issues.

*Table 16: Op-eds by topic*

Topic	Number	Percentage
Jordanian political affairs	29	10.1%
General national affairs	23	8.0%
Arab affairs	28	9.8%
Palestinian affairs	51	17.8%
Non-Arab regional affairs	18	6.3%
International affairs	21	7.4%
Egyptian affairs	19	6.7%
Islamic ideology and heritage	69	24.1%
Other issues	28	9.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>286</b>	<b>100%</b>

## **B. Analysis of Issues and Events**

The analysed articles tackled four major issues related to extremism and terrorism. This part examines how these articles addressed these issues in terms of news coverage and analysis.

### **► Occupation of the northern Iraqi city of Mosul by ISIS (June, 11 - June 20, 2014)**

News coverage of was very careful, which reflected how the editorial policy deals with such issues. The majority of columnists did not comment on the occupation of Mosul.

The newspaper refused to tell the readers that the Iraqi city was occupied by ISIS. It described the occupiers as armed men/gunmen, and tribal fighters, and sometime called the occupation a “Sunni revolt”. In the next three days, the newspaper reported that ISIS indeed overran Mosul. Under the initial news coverage, a headline read: “Islamic State Controls Mosul, Liberates Thousands of Prisoners” (Assabeel, June 11, 2014), and the next day, “Islamic State Controls More Cities North of Baghdad” (Assabeel, June 12, 2014).

The newspaper adopted a new approach after Iraqi’s Sunni Association of Muslim Scholars declared that “what is happening in Iraq is a revolution, and the popularisation of the term ‘Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant’ on the security landscape constitutes an open process designed to abort the revolution, and that the Iraqi protests are at the basis of the revolution” (Assabeel, June 14, 2014). The news coverage started to change, describing the new power as armed men/gunmen, and tribesmen; for example: “Gunmen Control More Areas in Northern, Western Baghdad” (Assabeel, June 15, 2014). On June 17, a headline read: “Revolutionaries in Iraq Seize Tal Afar”, “Iraqi Government Forces Battle Militias, Revolutionaries in North”. And on June 19, a headline read: “Gunmen Attack Baiji Refinery” (Assabeel, June 19, 2014).

The columnists' discourse on the occupation of Mosul and related events can be summarised as follows:

- Although the issue was major and significant, attracting all types of media outlets, Assabeel columnists were careful in addressing it in the first 10 days of the occupation. There were around four articles, and an analysis published in the first week.
- The columnists avoided to acknowledge the role of ISIS in Iraq's developments, insisting that what happened there was a revolt by Sunnis and tribesmen. In this context, Hazem Ayyad wrote: "Sunni Arabs steadily march on Baghdad to create a new reality that strengthens their negotiation position, while international powers popularise Daesh in the hope of turning the developments into a sectarian conflict that keeps Iran and the entire region busy." <sup>[5]</sup>
- Opinion pieces and analyses presented by the discourse did not welcome the international rejection/condemnation of developments in Iraq. These articles, however, held ISIS responsible sometimes for its actions, which tarnish jihad and give justification for attacking political Islam<sup>[6]</sup>. Abdullah Al Majali wrote about an image attributed by the media to ISIS and displayed at the Special Operations Forces Exhibition and Conference (SOFEX). The picture shows bearded men wearing Afghan clothes and a woman dressed in black dragging non-veiled women. The writer denounced what he described as an error aimed at smearing Mujahidin. In the same newspaper issue, a political analysis headlined: "Industry of Lies: The War

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[5] Ayyad, H. Iraq Between US Deliberateness and Iranian Hastiness. Assabeel. Amman. June 12, 2014. p. 2

[6] Industry of Lies: The War on Terrorism as a Model. Assabeel. Amman. June 15, 2014. p. 3

on Terrorism as a Model” was published, presenting reader comments on the image, with one saying: “This is a military drill at SOFEX in Amman, and the state will wipe the floor with liars”.<sup>[7]</sup>

- The unrest in Iraq is caused by marginalisation of Sunnis, Iran’s influence, and political alienation practiced by the government of Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri Al Maliki. This approach was adopted by many Arab media outlets.
- Rejection of any Jordanian role in Iraq, whether at the US request, or in line with any other calculations. This was expressed by Omar Al Ayasrah in the first article published on these events, cautioning the Jordanian government against supporting Maliki and the US.<sup>[8]</sup>
- Columnists or figures and opinion leaders of the Islamist movement, who usually comment on general issues, did not provide analyses or stance on the phenomenon of ISIS the group’s rise. The editorial policy during these events was generally characterised by carefulness.
- The editorial policy was committed to the use of the name “Islamic State group”, and in headlines, it was shortened to “Islamic State”, while sometimes it was linked to “Daesh”. Jordanian media outlets and the majority of other Arab media outlets called the group “Daesh,” describing it as terrorist. Some international media outlets used the group’s full name and abbreviations in line with professional standards. Assabeel, however, which considers itself as a representative of Islamic discourse, kept using the name “Islamic State”. In this case, the newspaper was influenced by political agenda considerations more than professional and editorial standards. That name stirred a debate topic, and raised questions that its use could mean that the group represents a state and it is Islamic.<sup>[9]</sup>

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[7] Industry of Lies: The War on Terrorism as a Model. Assabeel. Amman. June 15, 2014. p. 3

[8] Ayasrah, O. Major Crisis in Iraq. Assabeel. Amman. June 16, 2014. p. 2

[9] L  ridon, M. Covering the «Islamic State». Parliamentary Assembly. 2014.



- The opinion pieces addressing these issues did not reflect clear pluralism or diversification. This included the majority of articles on extremism and terrorism. Such writings shared the same basic theories. Writers outside the Islamist movement maintained this editorial policy most of the time. Obviously, self-censorship played a role, and columnists continued to define and identify Assabeel's editorial policies, including undeclared ones.

### ► **Capture of Royal Jordanian Air Force pilot Muath Al Kasasbeh by ISIS (December 24, 2014 -December 30, 2014)**

Initial news coverage of the shoot down of a Jordanian jet fighter near the Syria city of Raqqa on December, 24, 2014, and the capture of the pilot tended to be professionally balanced, covering almost all sides of the story. At the same time, the newspaper did not give a lot of attention to the incident itself, and this applied to columnists. Under this coverage, a main headline read: "Jordanian Military Jet Down, 'State' Group Captures Pilot" (Assabeel, December 25, 2014). Then, a headline of a news report read: "Will Jordanian Jihadists Mediate to Release Pilot?" (Assabeel, December 25, 2014). On the third day, a headline of a news analysis read: "Government Options on Pilot Kasasbeh" (Assabeel, December 28, 2014), and on the fourth, "Trustworthy/Reliable Parties Exert Secret Efforts to Rescue Kasasbeh" (Assabeel, December 28, 2014).

In general, the news coverage took a pacification approach or a policy of calming down the public, avoiding sensationalism, and tending to be balanced in dealing with sources. Discourse approaches expressed by columnists showed following characteristics:

- The discourse tended to avoid making a statement about the incident, or delving into its details. This led to a decrease in the number of op-eds addressing the issue, compared to other Jordanian dailies -- only five opinion articles were published by Assabeel in the first week.
- The discourse drew close to national political agendas, with the majority of columnists focusing on the safe return of the pilot, and standing behind the Jordan Armed Forces. Ayasrah, for example, “urged everyone to stand behind the army at this stage, whether those who support or oppose the idea of going to war. The most important thing is the return of the pilot.”<sup>[10]</sup>

In the same context, Bassem Sakkejha said the government was confused about the issue, and sometimes appeared “absent from the scene.”<sup>[11]</sup>

- The discourse warned against provoking ISIS, saying any provocations would strengthen the group’s negotiation position. The newspaper focused on negotiations, and giving jihadists a chance to politically resolve the issues. Assabeel refrained from attacking jihadist groups. Ayasrah wrote that “provocations and threats on satellite TV channels will not bring Kasasbehback.”<sup>[12]</sup>

The newspaper rejected the war on terrorism, saying it is not Jordan’s war, and urged the country to avoid embroiling itself by supporting the US and the government of Maliki.

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[10] Ayasrah, O. The Most Important Thing is the Safe Return of the Pilot. Assabeel. Amman. December 28, 2014. p. 2

[11] Sakkejha, B. The Government’s Confusion Confuses People. Assabeel. Amman. December 28, 2014. p. 2

[12] Ayasrah, O. The Most Important Thing is the Safe Return of the Pilot. Assabeel. Amman. December 28, 2014. p. 2

## ► Paris attacks (November 14, 2015 - November 19, 2015):

They were a series of coordinated terrorist attacks that occurred on Friday 13 November 2015 in Paris, France, and the city's northern suburb, Saint-Denis. Three suicide bombers struck outside the Stade de France in Saint-Denis. This was followed by several mass shootings, and a suicide bombing, at cafes and restaurants. Gunmen carried out another mass shooting and took hostages at a concert in the Bataclan theatre. ISIS claimed responsibility for the attacks.

Assabeel's news coverage of the attacks was generally comprehensive in terms of news elements, but some reports on specific issues expressed reservations. The main headline was: "Paris Attacks Spread Terror Worldwide" (Assabeel, November 15, 2015).

Following are key features of the news coverage and discourse:

- The news coverage did not describe the attacks as terrorism, but kept this term in direct quotes. Instead, columnists used the term "bloody attacks". Sakkejha and Fahmi Huwaidi, however, called the attack terrorism twice.
- Columnists refused to acknowledge that ISIS was behind the attack. This applies to Assabeel's discourse, which insists on blaming intentional conspiracy for attacks linked to jihadist groups. Columnists backed by the Islamist movement as well as other writers believe in the same idea.

Jamal Al Shawahin wrote: "Is Deash really behind the attacks, or is it a US-Israeli-Russian intelligence act?"<sup>[13]</sup>

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[13] Shawahin, J. Paris as an Example. Assabeel. Amman. November 16, 2015. p. 2

For his part, Sakkejha said: “After ISIS claimed responsibility for the attacks, analyses in the West implicitly accepted the announcement of the group, which is viewed (in the West) as a sponge that would absorb all terrorists in the world. Some even say that the West helped in the spread of ISIS.” [14]

In what can be seen as justification, Ibrahim Do’nah wrote: “Who created, evoked, and spread terrorism? Who is still sponsoring terrorism? They are those who plotted and conspired against Islam and Muslims, and installed agents in the Muslim world. They are those who despoiled and looted the abundance and resources of our countries.” [15]

- There was a limited margin of diversification in the stance columnists took to express solidarity and sympathy with the civilian victims of the attacks. With the exception of some writers, showing solidarity and sympathy was indirectly rejected in general.

Majali said: “Do Paris attacks remind us of the French crimes? I do not think that those who remind us today of France’s crimes want to justify the bloody attacks or gloat over French blood. Those are simply enraged at a policy of doublestandards.” [16]

Do’nah wrote: “If you play with fire, you get burned eventually, and poison makers will try it one day. You cannot control the behaviour of those who see injustice, murder, and forced displacement.” [17]

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[14] Sakkejha B. Paris: The New Terrorism Scenario. Assabeel. Amman. November 16, 2015. p. 2

[15] Do’nah, I. Violence and Terrorism. Assabeel. Amman. November 18, 2015. p. 12.

[16] Majali, A. Paris Attacks Reminder of French Crimes. Assabeel. Amman. November 18, 2015. p. 10.

[17] Do’nah, I. Violence and Terrorism. Assabeel. Amman. November 18, 2015. p. 12.

Huwidi said: “As we express our condolences, solidarity, and sympathy with the families of victims, we should say that Daesh’s brutality did not come of formless void; it came from the tyranny and despotism of the Baath regime.”<sup>[18]</sup>

According to Mohammad Alawnah, “Some think that criticising exaggerated sympathy with the victims of the Russian plane crash or with those who were killed in Paris attacks is inhumane. At the same time, those (critics) want to show how they view criminal acts around the world, and not only in Syria and Iraq.”<sup>[19]</sup>

## II. Analysis of Concepts: Attributes and Roles

In the sample of 286 op-eds, columnists tried to steer clear of extremism and moderatism attributes, but excessively used the concept of terrorism with multiple political and ideological formulas.

The discourse believes that the concept of extremism is an external products aimed at tarnishing Islam in general, and political Islam in particular -- which is a central connotation. But it is a rarity to find explicit acknowledgment in the discourse that extremism occurs in society due to intraindividual dynamics of misinterpreting Islam. The discourse blames external sources or internal ones with external links, revealing a set of determents and perspectives, which influence the discourse on extremism and moderatism:

- Extremism is a functional phenomenon, for which radical groups were employed to link Islam to specific practices.<sup>[20]</sup>

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[18] Huwaidi, F. Expanding the Circle of Anger. Assabeel. Amman. November 18, 2015. p. 2.

[19] Alawnah M. A Catastrophe for Egypt as it is for Russia. Assabeel. Amman. November 17, 2015. p. 2.

[20] Helmi F. He Suddenly Became Religious; Does This Make Him a Terrorist? Assabeel. Amman. November 15, 2015. p. 2.

- Extremism is a reaction, not an action. Huwaidi wrote: “Daesh’s brutality did not come of formless void; it came from the tyranny and despotism of the Baath regime.”<sup>[21]</sup>

Bassam Nasser said: “The world promotes slogans on combatting radical groups because it knows that extremism and extremism would not have spread if the regimes that the world supports and allies with had been good.”<sup>[22]</sup>

- Oppression of moderate powers facilitates the rise of extremism. Atef Julani lists four reasons behind the increase in behavioural and ideological extremism:<sup>[23]</sup>

**Political:** Oppression, political deadlock, as well as absence of democracy, fair elections, and peaceful transfer of power pushed people to lose faith in the ability introduce reform and peaceful change.

**Ideological:** Governments fight moderate and centrist ideologies, without differentiating moderates and radicals.

**Economic:** Corruption and failure of government plans to improve the economy, alleviate poverty and unemployment, and ensure fair allocation of development projects.

**Rights and freedom:** Governments oppress, detain, and, if necessary, kill opponents.

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[21] Huwaidi, F. Expanding the Circle of Anger. Assabeel. Amman. November 18, 2015. p. 8.

[22] Nasser B. Principles and Values Are Infrangible. Amman. November 17, 2015. p. 2.

[23] Julani, A. Confronting Extremism: Forgotten Aspects, and Flawed Priorities. Assabeel. Amman. December 29, 2014. p.12.

- Extremism is an accusation aimed at forcing people to renounce their religious beliefs. Mohammad Iqbal Al Dabbas wrote: “What happened to Dr. Iyad Al Quneibi required a response, not in defence of the man, but in defence of a faith that some want to trim.”

In these cases, the discourse does not acknowledge intraindividual dynamics of misinterpreting Islam or how religion is employed to serve political goals as reasons behind the rise of extremism. Instead, the discourse links extremism to external factors as well as two central theories: Conspiracy and tyranny or despotism.

In the discourse, the concept of terrorism is clearer and less confused than extremism and moderatism. The main dimensions and perspectives on this issue are:

- Terrorism is a deluded political concept invented by the West and its allies in the region. Kathem Ayeshe wrote: “The deluded term of the war on terrorism explains what is happening the entire region. America, leader of the new world order, came up with the term and marketed it among fools and collaborators. It perfectly knows it is a lie.”<sup>[24]</sup>
- Terrorism is an instrument used in international conflict to control global interests. Ali Al Otum said: “This war waged on us in the name of the fight against terrorism, a deadly conflict in which the West and East are embroiled, is nothing but a war on a Syria. They do not want to see Islam there.”<sup>[25]</sup>

Salem Al Falahat wrote: “Investing in terrorism quickly yields money and fortune, but such ill-gotten gains are temporary.”<sup>[26]</sup>

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[24] Ayeshe, K. What is Happening in Iraq. Assabeel. Amman. June 17, 2014. p. 2.

[25] Otum, A. Syria and the Big Lesson. Assabeel. Amman. November 30, 2015. p. 10.

[26] Falahat, S. Terrorism of Law, or Law of Terrorism? Assabeel. Amman. June 19, 2014. p. 10.

- Terrorism is ambiguous, confusing, contradictory, and multifaceted concept. Falahat said: “How does the world define terrorism? Is it a clear term? Or is it word such as ghou, griffin, and other words describing mythological creatures? An honest nationalist can be described as terrorism, and giving advice or warning can be seen as terrorism.” [27]

In this context, the discourse lists terrorist acts committed to distort or hide the truth. Amid chaos, some terrorist groups claimed responsibility for such acts based on undisclosed understandings and agreements. The goal of this chaos is to keep the definition of terrorism and terrorist ambiguous. Ahmad Nofal writes on the Russian plane crash in Sinai: “It is likely that Daesh was trying to hide the truth about the real perpetrator. It is likely that Daesh works for this goal, especially in light of suspicions about the group’s inception and rise. I do not rule out that the act committed or Daesh’s claims for responsibility aimed to cover or distort the truth. Thirty years from now, when information and documents get declassified, we will know the real perpetrator.” [28]

- Terrorism is made by regional oppressive regimes allied with the West and major powers. According to this perspective, it is possible to say that the sources of terrorism in the region are the Syrian and Egyptian regimes. The discourse tends to generalise, attributing terrorism to oppressive political regimes in the Arab world.
- Limitations in identifying the definitions of extremism and moderatism in individual behavioural and cultural choices or options. The media content offers open and multiple, but limited, conceptual connotations in this regard. For example, Akram Al Swair wrote: “The Prophet [Muhammad] set a genuine example for Muslims, teaching them how to control their lusts and get used to it. Then he advanced and developed behaviours of

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[27] Falahat. S. Terrorism of Law, or Law of Terrorism? Assabeel. Amman. June 19, 2014. p. 10.

[28] Nofal A. Who Downed the Russian Plane? Assabeel. Amman. November 14, 2015. p. 10.



Muslims by ensuring they are committed to Koran values; chiefly giving themselves over to God, while at the same time refrain from fighting and commit to dialogue, and Dawah (proselytising or preaching of Islam).” [29]

Odah Abu Tayeh said: “Separating religion from the state is imported deception and return to Jahiliyyah (Islamic concept of days of ignorance of the guidance from God). Islam rejects that rulers get gluttoned with food, and buy islands, amusement parks, and palaces. Islamist preachers, meanwhile, are doomed to be hanged. If you say Islam represents faith, state, sword, jihad, sharia, and system, you will be accused of terrorism, although the accusers are traitors and mercenaries, representing the damned terrorism.” [30]

At the same time, the newspaper launches annual campaigns against Jerash Festival, describing it as a festival of obscenities (Assabeel, July 11, 2014).

Shawahin wrote: “Terrorism was and still happening, and will always happen. First it was through oppression and repression, then through occupation, and killing. The situations in Syria and Libya are no different.” [31]

Julani details how Arab regimes constitute the “main source of terrorism”. “These governments fight moderate and centrist ideologies, without differentiating moderates and radicals, trying hard to impose Western values, and ignoring that the culture of Arab societies is largely built on religion.” [32]

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[29] Sawair, A. Where is the way? Assabeel. Amman. June 14, 2014. p. 12.

[30] Abu Tayeh, O. Our New Jews and the Fight Against Terrorism. Assabeel. Amman. June 13, 2014. p. 12.

[31] Shawahin, J. Terrorism and Kebab as an Example. Assabeel. Amman. December 30, 2014. p. 2.

[32] Julani, A. Confronting Extremism: Forgotten Aspects, and Flawed Priorities. Assabeel. Amman. December 29, 2014. p. 16.

Terrorism is made by Iran. The discourse believes that Iran's growing influence, and practices to sow sedition and fuel sectarian strife contribute to the rise of terrorism. It escalated in recent years due to an increase in political agendas opposing Iran's interference, particularly in Syria, Lebanon, and Yemen.

Ayda Motlaq said: "Iran managed to infiltrate the Arab world, exploiting contradictions of Arab regimes. Iranian leaders brag that their country's powers and forces passed the region from Kabul to Beirut, including Baghdad and Damascus, and reached for the first time since [Persian Emperor] Cyrus the Great, the Arabian Peninsula, the Mediterranean, and Mandeb Strait. Iran's insolence was clear when [adviser to Iranian President Hassan Rouhani] Ali Younesi boasted, saying that Baghdad is the capital of the new Iranian empire."<sup>[33]</sup>

Nasser wrote: "Does Iran fight or sponsor terrorism? Those (Iranians) trying to market their discourse and warning against takfiri ideology are smearing the senior companions of the Prophet Muhammad, Abu Bakr and Omar, and others, including Mothers of the Faithful Believers, and accusing them of robbing Ali ibn Abi Talib of Imamate (leadership). It is extremely weird that Iran is considered as part of the war on terrorism, although Tehran is a staunch supporter of terrorism. Tens of thousands of Iranian-backed militiamen are actively involved in killings in Iraq, Syria, and elsewhere."<sup>[34]</sup>

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[33] Motlaq, A. The Regional Scene Between the Arab Absence and Iranian Expansion. Assabeel. Amman. March 25, 2015. p. 12.

[34] Nasser, B. Does Iran Fight or Sponsor Terrorism. Assabeel. Amman. December 29, 2015. p. 2. 35 Salameh 2002.

### III. Analysis of Frames of Reference

Discourses are derived from multiple ideologies with different perspectives on issues. This methodological instrument enables researchers to extract frames of references for ideological approaches, which form the basis for media discourses or stances on political or social movements, or political/ideological debate on issues.

The political/ideological debate on terrorism and extremism include multiple frames of references, most importantly the Islamic ideology, which largely influences the newspaper's discourse. Assabeel is also governed by general political, legal, and human frames of reference, in addition to social and economic fundamentals, which determine Arab ideologies. Precise procedural definition of every frames of reference help reveal the identity of discourse producers and how they use symbols and evoke events.

The researcher employed these instruments to build the discourse analysis in this sample, using quantitative and qualitative observation to produce results, identifying the following frames of reference:

**A. Islamic:** Formed the main source of ideological, political, cultural, and emotional support for writers' discourse on events and issues -- 31 percent of content. Generally, definition of this frame of reference was based on Islamic cultural, historical, symbolic and fiqh-related (Islamic Jurisprudence) backgrounds.

The general Islamic frame of reference was reflected by columnists in four subcategories, which were examined to serve the goal of outlining the newspaper's discourse on extremism and terrorism. The subcategories are (table 17):

- **Moderate:** This subcategory formed 12 percent of op-ed content. It included articles based on evidence, giving Islamic examples, and usually citing multiple sources. Other viewpoints might be incorporated without affecting the main Islamic-based idea.
- **Radical:** Constituting four percent of op-ed content, this subcategory is comprised of articles based entirely on one-sided evidence, examples, and interpretations. The tone tends to be extreme in using attributes and defining roles. The majority of writers under this subcategory are leaders of the Islamist movement or readers.
- **Popular:** At four percent, this subcategory groups articles that are based on popular interpretations of Islam in general. These writings employed Al Ghaib (transcendental or divine) thoughts, and sometimes myth, emotions and sensationalism.
- **Mixed:** Articles that combine the aforementioned subcategories (11 percent).

**B. Political:** Op-eds and articles written by regular columnists and based on political interoperations of issues and events, including conflict and interests (21 percent).

**C. Professional and scientific:** Articles that rely on professional and scientific sources to present evidence and prove viewpoints (11 percent).

**D. Legal:** Op-eds built on legal reference to prove or refute theories (six percent).

**E. Human:** Writings addressing issues and even from comprehensive human perspective and understanding, clearly presenting core human values (four percent).

*Table 17: Analysis of frames of reference*

Frames of reference	Number of items	Percentage
Political	59	21%
Legal	16	6%
Human	12	4%
Traditional and historical	27	9%
Moderate	34	12%
Radical	11	4%
Popular	13	5%
Mixed	33	11%
Professional and scientific	33	11%
Unspecified	48	17%
<b>Total</b>	<b>286</b>	<b>100%</b>

## IV. Analysis of Theories

This instrument is employed to examine and understand the main ideas agreed by producers of the political/ideological discourse. Those writers usually repeat these theories, using different expressions sometimes, backed by a series of explanatory statements, evidence and facts.

Examining Assabeel's political/ideological discourse on extremism and terrorism, the researcher identified four key theories:

### A. Conspiracy

Critical thinking started to develop in Arab discourse in 1980s. One of the main pillars of this type of thinking is criticism of the conspiracy theory, disapproving conspiracy-based justifications for backwardness, oppression, and defeat. Arab media rejected the idea of blaming external factors for oppression, failure and defeat. But with the US-led occupation of Iraq and

“Arab Spring” transitions, the conspiracy theory was revived, and employed by political Islam or Islamism to justify and explain setbacks as well as extremism, terrorism and the war on terrorism.

Assabeel columnists adopted the conspiracy theory to explain extremism, and terrorism, using statements such as:

- The alliance between the ruling oppressive powers in the Arab world and international powers led to demonisation of political Islam, linking it to terrorism.
- The alliance between international powers, Zionism, and Israel seeks to tarnish the image of any resistance movement, linking it to terrorism and extremism.
- The main goal of the war on terrorism is to distort the image of Islam, particularly jihad, linking it to murder, brutality, and decapitations.

The discourse presents a series of evidence as well as frames of reference based on Islamic culture or Islamism, as seen in the following citations/quotations:

- **Fadwa Helmi:** “Linking Islam and terrorism was created by the media and intelligence agencies over the years. Radical groups were employed to support this link, and establish in people’s minds that extremism is linked to Islam. International intelligence agencies’ well-studied efforts and agenda created a new definition of jihad, considering as it terrorism.” [35]
- **Huwidi:** “The conspiracy theory sometimes explains what is happening. Daesh spreads terror across the Arab world and is a threat to the Iraqi and Syrian regimes, and this creates a nightmarish scenario that supports the governments of Baghdad and Damascus. Comparing the two bad regimes

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[35] Helmi F. He Suddenly Became Religious; Does This Make Him a Terrorist? Assabeel. Amman. November 15, 2015. p. 2.

with Daesh makes them the least-worst options. Meanwhile, giving Daesh the chance to advance as an Islamic model strongly mobilises people against advances of Islamist movements, which rose up during the Arab Spring.” [36]

- **Otum:** “Behind-the-scene deliberations between dehqans (elite politicians and magnates) and pirates decided who implements decisions of the assembly and fights imaginary terrorism made by those dehqans and created by their policies. Sooner or later, we will realise that nations of the East and West from Tangiers to Malaysia are conspiring against us.” [37]
- **Motlaq:** “The regional scene is full of players, except for Arabs, who favoured safety, and aligning with major powers in conspiracies against the nation, its fate, and role.” [38]

## B. Holy War

According to this theory, the West is still waging religious or holy war against Muslims. It is mainly adopted by leaders and ideologues of the Islamist movement, more than professional columnists. The theory can be clearly seen when those leaders and ideologues address developments in Syria, or the overthrow of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt. The historical theory is based on a set of explanatory statements, including:

- The war on terrorism is a continuation of historical religious or holy war under a different name that only provides a propagandic cover.
- The new religious or holy war is another form of the Crusades.
- This war targets all Muslims and is used to prevent the Islamists from reaching power.

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[36] Huwidi F. Daesh. Assabeel. Amman. June 16, 2014. p. 2.

[37] Otum, A. Installation of Sisi as Ruler of Egypt. Assabeel. Amman. June 12, 2014. p. 12.

[38] Motlaq, A. The Regional Scene Between the Arab Absence and Iranian Expansion. Assabeel. Amman. March 25, 2015. p. 12.

- This war evokes historical grudges against Muslims.

The discourse is built on a series of evidence forming a sort of an ideological system that can be seen in the following citations:

- **Ayesh:** “America, which is ruled by the Zionist lobby, holds grudges against Muslims and it is the sponsor of the new Crusades wars on the region.” [39]
- **Otum:** “The war the apostate world is now waging against us, was waged in the past under the names of Crusades and Colonial wars. Now this war is called the war on terrorism, a bloody conflict, in which the East, West, Crusades, Communists, Jews, paganists, and magus (a reference to Iran), take part in a war on Syria, where they do not want to see Islam. This is clear as day; it is a war against Islam, and in Syria in particular. [Greater] Syria is home to Al Aqsa and Umayyad mosques, and hosts the location Armageddon, where Issa (Jesus) will kills [Al-Masih] ad-Dajjal (Antichrist) along with 70,000 Jews, preaches/calls for Islam, and establishes a Caliphate. This what the apostate countries fears most. Why didn’t these countries interfere in Tunisia, Libya, or Egypt the same outrageous way they did in Syria? Who brought together paganist China, atheist Russia, Crusaders of the West, and Jews, worshipers of Golden calf, to wage this war?” [40]
- **Mowaffaq Al Sibai:** “The war against Muslims in Syria is a religious war. This war on the Syrian uprising is worse than the (AD 627) Battle of the Trench or the Confederates (between Muslims led by the Prophet Muhammad and Arab and Jewish tribes), which Koran describes as very fierce.”[41]

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[39] Ayesh, K. What is Happening in Iraq. Assabeel. Amman. June 17, 2014. p. 3.

[40] Otum, A. Syria and the Big Lesson. Assabeel. Amman. November 30, 2015. p. 12.

[41] Sibai, M. Syria. Assabeel. Amman. March 3, 2015. p. 10.



## C. International Relations and Conflict of Interests

This theory blames unjust and unbalanced international relations for the rise of extremism and terrorism. Built on political and legal frames of reference, this theory is mainly adopted by professional columnists, more than Islamist movement leaders.

The theory is based on a set of statements, mainly:

- Terrorism and extremism are resulted from international conflict over the region.
- Terrorism and extremism are linked to the Middle East conflict, specifically the deadlocked Palestinian cause.
- The ongoing domination of intentional relations by superpowers.
- International conflict of interests created a suitable environment for building alliances and evoking local/regional conflicts, mainly sectarianism.
- **Shawahin:** “The G20 summit should have examined the core of regional conflict and that the Jewish racist state is responsible for regional destruction as well as rise of terrorism in Europe, and that the Daesh lie has become more than absurd and ridiculous.”<sup>[42]</sup>
- **Alawanah:** “Maliki’s policies led to what is happening in Iraq. Tehran’s interference would boost the popularity of the so-called Deash.”<sup>[43]</sup>
- **Shawahin:** “In reality, what is happening in the region is an American-Russian conflict over Iraq. It is not to support Syria; it is to get Moscow out of it.”<sup>[44]</sup>

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[42] Shawahin, J. In Search of the Beneficiary. Assabeel. Amman. November 17, 2015. p. 2.

[43] Alawnah M. Late Time. Assabeel. Amman. June 15, 2014. p. 2.

[44] Shawahin, J. The Conflict Giants. Assabeel. Amman. June 16, 2016. p. 2.

- **Ayesh:** “What is happening in the region is not caused by Daesh. It is resulted from injustice, corruption, and sectarianism in the region following Khomeini’s (1979 Iranian) revolution.” [45]

## D. Sectarianism and Response to Iran

The theory believes that Iran’s growing influence, and practices to sow sedition and fuel sectarian strife largely contribute to the rise of terrorism. This belief escalated in recent years due to an increase in political agendas opposing Iran’s interference, particularly in Syria, Lebanon, and Yemen.

Motlaq wrote: “Iran managed to infiltrate the Arab world, exploiting contradictions of Arab regimes. Iranian leaders brag that their country’s powers and forces passed the region from Kabul to Beirut, including Baghdad and Damascus, and reached for the first time since [Persian Emperor] Cyrus the Great, the Arabian Peninsula, the Mediterranean, and Mandeb Strait. Iran’s insolence was clear when [adviser to Iranian President Hassan Rouhani] Ali Younesi boasted, saying that Baghdad is the capital of the new Iranian empire.” [46]

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[45] Ayesh, K. What is Happening in Iraq. Assabeel. Amman. June 17, 2014. p. 2.

[46] Motlaq, A. The Regional Scene Between the Arab Absence and Iranian Expansion. Assabeel. Amman. March 25, 2015. p. 12.

## Conclusion and Results

This study was aimed at identifying features of the Islamist movement's discourse on extremism, terrorism, and moderatism in a bid to offer a clearer reading of the media discourse on these issues. The study was based on two methodological instruments: Analysis of new coverage content, and analysis of discourse adopted in op-eds, which is a more accurate instrument to understand features of the ideological discourse. The study samples comprised 49 issues of Assabeel daily newspaper, known among political and media circles for reflecting the views of Jordan's Muslim Brotherhood and its political arm, the IAF.

### 1. General Results

The study arrived at the following results:

- a. In the prevailing media context governing the performance of Arab newspapers in general, and Jordanian dailies, there are no major structural flaws in the allocation and diversification of Assabeel's editorial interest and priorities. The results of the content analysis did not indicate irregular patterns in the centres of attention or particular news coverage agendas.
- b. In terms of geographical identity, Assabeel's editorial agenda is not different from the agendas of other Jordanian dailies, despite the newspaper's editorial policy and ownership patterns.
- c. The study indicated an acceptable level of commitment to the professional standards and practices. Four standards were used to determine the extent to which Assabeel's editorial policy complies with professional practices:
  - **Dealing with sources:** Proportion of news items quoting anonymous, or vague sources constituted 12 percent of content.

- **Balance:** Seventy-five percent of news reports were balanced -- a high rate compared to other Jordanian dailies.
  - **Separating facts from opinion/speculations:** Eighty-two percent of news content complies with this principle. Speculation, however, was clear in 11 percent. Speculation attracts political agendas, which turn the media into a tool of propaganda in a bid to influence society and politics.
  - **Bias:** Eighty-two percent of news reports covering local, regional, or international developments were unbiased.
- d. Describing specific incidents as terrorism is limited: Only 61 cases, representing six percent of news content, including reports on Israel's terrorism. This means that Assabeel had reservations describing incidents linked to Islamist groups as terrorism.
  - e. Op-eds reflected clear interest in Islamic ideologies and affairs, national issues, the Palestinian cause. At the level of the Arab world, the columnists focused on Syrian, and Egyptian issues, and regionally on Turkey and Iran.
  - f. The discourse believes that the concept of extremism is an external products aimed at tarnishing Islam in general, and political Islam in particular -- which is a central connotation. But it is a rarity to find explicit acknowledgment in the discourse that extremism occurs in society due to intraindividual dynamics of misinterpreting Islam. The discourse blames external sources or internal ones with external links. In these cases, the discourse does not acknowledge intraindividual dynamics of misinterpreting Islam or how religion is employed to serve political goals as reasons behind the rise of extremism. Instead, the discourse links extremism to external factors as well as two central theories: Conspiracy and tyranny or despotism.
  - g. The discourse presents a set of explanatory justifications for extremism:
    - Extremism is a functional phenomenon, for which radical groups were employed to link Islam to specific practices.

- Extremism is a reaction, not an action.
  - Oppression of moderate powers facilitates the rise of extremism
- h. The discourse acknowledges that terrorism is an ambiguous and deluded concept employed for international interests. It gets clearer when it talks about the war on terrorism, described as international delusion.
  - i. The discourse presents a set of explanatory justifications for terrorism:
    - Terrorism is a deluded political concept invented by the West and its allies in the region.
    - Terrorism is made by regional oppressive regimes allied with the West and major powers.
    - Terrorism is made by Iran to expand, boost its influence, and fuel sectarianism.
  - j. The discourse on terrorism-related issues is built on four central theories, on which discourse producers based their judgement of political and social issues: Conspiracy; holy war; conflict control and intentional interests; and the Iranian influence. Every theory is backed by its own ideological system, statements, and evidence.
  - k. Unlike news coverage, op-eds did not reflect diversification and pluralism. The discourse analysis showed similarities in judgment and interpretation of issues. Some limited opinions, however, was not committed to this editorial policy.
  - l. The Islamic frame of reference topped the set of criteria or stated values on which the columnists relied. Twelve percent of op-eds based on this frame of reference reflected moderatism, while four percent indicated extremism. Political, legal, and human frames of reference followed.

## II. Conclusion

- a. Assabeel's news coverage reflects a clear professional development in the performance of Arab dailies that advocates political Islam, whether in professional standards or diversification of news.
- b. The media discourse does not support extremism, but at the same time, it does not resist or caution against this phenomenon.
- c. The editorial policy has clear reservations over the concept of terrorism and the war on terrorism. It presents justifications for acts and values considered by the international media as terrorism.

## Commentary on the Study

**By Atef Joulani**

Editor in Chief of AsSabeel Newspaper

I start with extending deep thanks to my friend Mr. Oraib Rintawi and to AlQuds Center for Political Studies which we are used to its scientific studies on major events.

### **We deeply thank the Center for two reasons:**

1. The Center's interest in AsSabeel Newspaper and conducting a special study on its content and media discourse on a major issue.
2. The Center's invitation to me as Editor in Chief of AsSabeel being responsible for its news content and editorial policy to comment on the study and express notes.

### **Notes and Comments:**

1. Selecting AsSabeel as a case to study the Media Content and Discourse of the Islamic Movement
  - We do not have any problem at all as a newspaper to have our news contents and media discourse considered. To the contrary, it is to our pleasure and it helps us develop our performance. However, this must be done as the case should be and in harmony with our image.
  - If the Study has been limited to the second topic (a study on the analysis of the content and discourse of AsSabeel Daily). This is accurate but to consider its content as expressing the Media Discourse of the Islamic Movement is something that we have our reserves to and we think it needs to be re-considered.

- If the aim is to study the media content and discourse of the Islamic Movement, it had been better to assess the same via the Movement's stands, statements, and declarations by its officials.
- The Islamic Movement does not introduce us as representatives to its content and media discourse towards any case whatsoever. We do not introduce ourselves as such with all due respect to the Islamic Movement which I am a member of. We also respect all the other Jordanian political parties, forces and movements.
- As per its legal license, AsSabeel is an independent paper that does not belong to a party and does not speak in the name of any political agency. In fact, it is not administratively, organizationally, or financially affiliated to the Islamic Movement. It does not take any instructions, guidance, or policies from the Movement. We do not have any administrative, financial or organizational relationship with it. I, personally, completely detach myself as a member of the Movement from my job as an editor in chief of AsSabeel.

## 2. On the Title of the Study:

The Study tackles the media content and discourse towards the extremist groups. It is logical to have the title as "The Media Content and Discourse of AsSabil Newspaper Towards Moderation and Extremism". However, the actual title is (Moderation and Extremism in the Media Discourse of the Islamic Movement). There is a big difference between these that the Study should have taken into consideration. Instead, the Study was concerned with the coverage that the newspaper implements for the extremism and terrorism cases. It did not concentrate on the extent of moderation of the paper or the movement.

3. Authors of articles: the Study considers that their personal opinions that they express freely and independently express the Islamic Movement Discourse. In this respect, the following clarifies this point:



- a. Authors of articles in AsSabeel represent a wide scope of pluralism and diversification. They come from a large scope of independent figures and those who hold ideas that do not belong to the Islamic Movement as only few are affiliated to it. In figures, only one out of six daily columnists can be seen as a member of the Islamic Movement. Two are independent and not religiously committed, the other two belong to the independent non-ideological national trend (Omar Ayasra and Hazem Ayyad). However, Fahmi Hweidi is an Arab Islamic scholar who is totally independent and is not affiliated to any specific political or intellectual framework, Therefore, the writings and discourse of these writers cannot be seen as expressing the directives and discourse of the Islamic Movement. In fact, to consider the same as such implies a real problem in relation with the conclusions of the study which appraised the Movement's discourse based on judgment of writers who do not belong to it and do not express its stand and discourse.
- b. The Content and Discourse of Articles: We never interfere in the performance of article writers whatsoever. They express merely their own stands. We do not interfere in their selection of topics; we do not direct them and we do not delete or add even one single letter to their writings unless it is a spelling or grammar mistake or if violates the Law of Press and Publications. Even this rarely happens. Several times, AsSabeel writers have criticized the Islamic Movement in Jordan and other countries. AsSabeel published their writings without any restriction or interference.

In this respect, I quote Mr. Basem Sakkijha on 15.3.2014 after one whole month of his publishing in AsSabeel:

“Today, one whole month has passed when I have been writing with full freedom. I testify that my articles did not undergo any change even if with one single letter although I violated the declared policies of the newspaper and the political trend it represents and sometimes with clear sharpness”.

After two years and on 15.3.2016, Sakkijha wrote the following:

“The cause for anxiety is that I have never been affiliated to the Moslem Brotherhood Movement. To the contrary, I have been classified as leftist, secular, liberal, pure Nasiri (after Jamal AbdunNaser). In between all of the above and the Islamic Movement, there are many hard issues. Therefore, my colleagues could not believe that I am writing and publishing in a newspaper that speaks for my thought opponent. For sure, their justifiable implicit questions were: Did our friend give away his convictions? Did he move his rifle from one shoulder to another as writers usually do? Today, I will present some confessions that I have not written in the past two years. It is about time for such confessions. The offer to publish in AsSabeel was initiated by me and not by the Editor in Chief of AsSabeel as it is an unusual idea; you can even call it a [crazy] idea for some people. It occurred for me all of a sudden. I just wanted to test myself writing for a paper supposed to be my opponent intellectually and politically. I wanted to test this idea as I can be seen from another angle. In all cases, it has been a real test of democracy practice, diversification, and pluralism on the page of the same newspaper.

I must confess that the response of AsSabeel with approval was even faster than I could think of. In the same time, the colleagues challenged me in terms if my conditions are acceptable as I asked to write whatever I want up to the ceiling I want and that they cannot interfere in my writings no matter how simple this interference is. I went into a test that I can classify as the most important in my career. In my first article, I had “Declaration I”-no interference in my intellectual, social and political stands. I persisted in writing with all of these convictions without any interference by AsSabeel.”

Thus, AsSabeel does not interfere in the writings of its columnists and their media discourse. This is another intricacy if the content of those articles is used as a basis for appraising the media content and discourse of the Islamic Movement towards the extremism and terrorism issues. This intricacy can be even more complicated if those writings are seen as a basis to appraise the extent of moderation or extremism of the Islamic Movement.

## I add:

Most of the journalists and those in charge of the editorial positions in the Newspaper are not religiously committed and they do not belong to the Islamic Movement (Managing Editor, Head of the Local Affairs and seven journalists out of 11 in the Local Affairs, and the four members of the Sports Section, and four of five correspondents at governorates). The one who prepares the two weekly religious papers does not belong to the Islamic Movement.

4. The Study points out that the percentage of local articles in the news content of AsSabeel is 59% vis-à-vis the Arab and international content which accounts for 41%- 11% for the Arab affairs, 13% for the Palestinian Affairs and 11% for the regional and international affairs.

The Study comments: “In general there is no significant structural imbalance in the editorial interest spread of the Paper according to the common Arab Media context at the level of the Arab Dailies’ performance. However, from the professional dimension, the local content is still less than the international professional criteria.”

The Study had better clarify the international professional criteria. It is worth mentioning that there is a Jordanian particularity that is not there for the other countries... The Palestinian Cause is seen for all in Jordan – not only us – as part of the local cause and not otherwise.

5. The Study also concludes that AsSabeel “does not have a different editorial agenda in terms of the news concentration as per the Geographic identity compared with other Jordanian dailies despite their different editorial policies and patterns of ownership.” This is a significant reference, in my opinion, to the nature of the identity that the Paper wishes to reflect for itself.

6. The Study points out that the news content on the local and international levels is diversified and the coverage of the activities related to the King and the Throne Institution occupies (13%). The Government and ministries' events rank first (18%) and the coverage related to the issues of services and development rank second (16%): This means: the official news (the King, government and official institutions) as well as the news of services and development account for 47% of the coverage space. Thus, the question here is all about the extent to which describing the Paper as an opposition.
7. The Study views the balanced journalese content in the Paper as (what the sources in the content provide in terms of balanced representation of the event parties in the news coverage). The Study considers that this part accounts for 75% in the news and reports published by AsSabeel. However, the imbalanced news account for 21%. The Study comments that this is a high percentage compared with the other Jordanian dailies."

A study issued by the Jordanian Media Institute supports this in terms of the balance measure in the printed press with regard to the coverage of parliamentary elections. The Institute's study reveals that AsSabeel has been the daily with the highest dependence on two sources/views or more in the articles covering the elections. It was the least to depend on one source for its coverage. The Study also revealed that AsSabeel is the daily which most concentrates and highlights the role of the Independent Commission of Elections (an official commission) compared to the other dailies. This is a point in favor of AsSabeel which stands on the same distance from all others.

8. The Study also reveals that 82% of the news content in AsSabeel observes the rule of drawing a line between news and opinions. This is a core professional journalism principle. The Study also reveals that 89% of the Paper content draw a line between facts and guesses. This is a very high percentage that reflects interest in the professional aspect.

9. The Study also reveals that 825 of the news content in AsSabeel is not biased and this applies to the local, regional and international coverage. The Study comments: “This conclusion is – to a certain extent - in line with the results of the test of balanced coverage commitment”.

The Study reveals that the topic that is most biased in the local affairs is that of the direct government events and then, the coverage of public policies and service and development affairs. I could not understand what is meant by “biased” in covering the governmental events. Is it the bias to the public policies and the service and developmental affairs. I could not understand what is meant by the bias to coverage of the government events. Is it the bias to the account of the government or against it? The Study does not explain this.

10. In fact, it seems that the Study has tended sometimes to generalization and issuance of stands and judgments. Studies should avoid this tendency. They must come up with objective conclusions. They must be more cautious than other media and adhere to non-biased dealings. They must avoid issuance of judgments with full right to come up with accurate scientific results.

### **Generalization:**

On page 54, the Study states: “The discourse of the Paper columnists adopts the concept of conspiracy in explaining extremism and terrorism”. The text speaks of the discourse of all writers and not “some” or “the majority” of the writers the most of whom are independent.

## **Issuance of Judgments:**

- The Study mentions that freedoms and human rights account for 8% of the news content of the Paper. It says, “This rate is higher than in the other Jordanian dailies.” However, it tends to be judgmental when explaining this issue. It says, “this explains the direction of the Paper which reflects the directives of an opposition political movement.”
- The above judgment and conclusion oppose the reality and a specialized study conducted by Adala Center for Human Rights in December 2012. It monitored the performance of three dailies: (ArRai, AsSabeel, and Al-Ghad) in terms of their coverage of the human rights issues. It compared between two eras – before the Arab Spring in 2009 and post the Arab Spring in 2011.

The Study covered five categories of rights: (Civil rights, Political rights, economic rights, socio-cultural rights, and the International Humanitarian Law<sup>0</sup>). The Study concludes that AsSabeel has been the most interested in human rights both qualitatively and quantitatively in both eras. It emphasizes that AsSabeel has been the most advanced among the three dailies between 2009-2011 in terms of increased attention to issues of human rights. In terms of the qualitative side, the Study reveals that AsSabeel ranked first in covering all aspects of human rights. On the qualitative side, the Study reveals that AsSabeel ranked first in covering all aspects of human rights; it scored the highest in:

1. Covering the individual's right to personal safety.
2. The right to freedom of opinion and speech.
3. Economic rights.
4. Socio-cultural rights.
5. The right to education.
6. The right to free scientific research and creativity.

- The Study blames AsSabeel for using “the State” and “the Islamic State”. It states that the Paper does not observe the general editorial framework of the Jordanian media and most of the Arab media which use “DAESH” which they describe as terrorist organization. If some of the western media have kept this title in addition to the known acronyms of the name, this must be understood in the context of professional criteria. However, the Paper which introduces itself as representing the Islamic political discourse, has been keen on using the “Islamic State”. Noticeably, the political agenda weighed out the professional editorial one especially that a big discussion took place on this issue. So is the use of the “Islamic State” term a recognition of this organization as a state and that it is Islamic”. (Quoted from the Study page 38).

**There are several comments on this text:**

- a. Monitoring AsSabeel policies in relation with all issues, one will easily find out that the Paper is in harmony with its editorial policies. Even when things relate to the Israeli Occupation which it considers the worst extremism and terrorism form, it uses the word (Israel), the Israeli government, the Israeli army, and the Ministry of Defense of Israel. It describes Benjamin Nattenyaho as Prime Minister of Israel. It does not use the terms “the Zionist Entity”, and the Terrorist Israeli Army. It does not describe Nattenyaho as the terrorist or criminal not because he is otherwise but in observance of its editorial policies.

To describe the two split governments in the Palestinian territories, the Paper uses the terms “the Palestinian Government in Ramallah”, and “the Palestinian Government in Gaza”. It does not opt for embracing any stand.

The Paper has the Turkish governmental news agency ANADOL to cover the Turkish issues knowing that the Agency describes Geulen and the BKK as terrorist. However, these descriptions are not published in AsSabeel.

Why is the Study surprised to know that AsSabeel is doing so? Why does it consider it a bias to an intellectual or political agenda? Why does not it accept that it is based on journalism professionalism? In the meantime, it accepts this from the western journalism and considers it as professionalism and positive neutrality! Do those who conducted the Study accept the description used by the Arab media and view it as a professional description that everybody must use?

- b. Judgments: The Study states: “Apparently, the political agenda weighs out the editorial professional agenda”.
- c. Doubt arousal questions does not go in line with the nature of professional studies. The Study states: “Can this be seen that DAESH is a state and is Islamic?”
- d. We wish that those who conducted the Study could provide us with one source mentioning that AsSabeel is “introducing itself as representing the Islamic political discourse” as per the quoted text.
- Page 40 of the Study states: “The Paper is mainly characterized in its editorial policies with avoidance of the aggressive discourse against the Jihadist organizations even in the hardest conditions. The text relates to the first days of the crisis of the martyr pilot Ma’ath Kassassbeh where the Government and the national stakeholders opted for cooling people down and prioritize the safety of the Pilot. The Study blames AsSabeel for opting for cooling the response to the event instead of marking a stand against it.

We wish the Study- for the sake of balance and objectivity – could handle AsSabeel coverage after the execution of the Pilot Kassasbeh. In the first days of his imprisonment, the Government, the political groups, and the media agencies were concerned with his safety, In that period, AsSabeel was keen on publishing news from the official sources to the contrary of what other media agencies did and resulted in arresting some of their officials. However, things were totally different after the Pilot’s execution. I refer those who conducted



the Study to the issue of 5 February 2016 with its first page and other 9 pages designated to condemn the crime with the strongest expressions and it criminalized the villain terrorist act. This was the case afterwards. We wish the Study could highlight both eras and not only a period with different circumstances for everybody.

- DAESH control over Mosul in June 2014, the Study blames the paper for covering the events with “utmost” caution and “the first news that the Paper published for its readers refused to admit that those coming to Mosul belong to the Islamic State Organization (DAESH)”

The Study, however, states that AsSabeel in its description of the first three days that: “What happened was due to the action of the Islamic State. The first coverage had headlines such as: “The Islamic State takes control over Mosul and liberates 3 thousands from prisons”. On the following day: “ The Islamic State takes control over more cities to the North of Baghdad.”

In this context, it is worth mentioning that the “foggy” status confused the Jordanian Government and other Arab countries in terms of taking control over Mosul. It made everybody very cautious when mentioning the ID of this who took control over Mosul. Thus, in the following coverages, AsSabeel used the term “the Armed”. It is the same term used by the other Arab and international media. Even AlArabiya Channel modified its coverage as after they had described those who took control over Mosul as “members of DAESH” in the first three days, it started to describe them as “DAESH” and “Tribesmen”.

- AsSabeel avoids to criticize the “State Organization” (DAESH) and the terrorist practices: I refer those who conducted the Study to the coverage of AsSabeel of Kerak Castle events on 18.12.2016 and the attack of the Intelligence Premises in Ein Pasha on 6.6.2016 to be informed of the editorial policy of the Paper when things relate to a threat against the national security of Jordan.

However, to mention that AsSabeel writers objected to Jordan participating in the international efforts to combat terrorism before the crime of murdering the Pilot (Kassasbeh), we clarify that this was not the attitude of those writers only but also that of many political elites and people sectors.

In conclusion, these notes do not lessen the importance of the great scientific effort put in conducting the Study. We reiterate our thanks to AlQuds Center for Political Studies and Dr. Basem Tweisi. We also welcome all objective studies that include AsSabeel Paper in their critiques and evaluations.

Our notes are meant for clarification and cannot mean, in any way, that we are complaining. We will make sure to make use of the valuable conclusions of the Study.

# **Moderation and Extremism**

## **in the Media Discourse of the Islamic Movement**

An Analytical Study of the Content and Discourse  
of AsSabeel Jordanian Newspaper

